levels, to enable the Cooperative Banks to avail concessional refinance from NABARD.

(iii) Banks operating in N.E. States are charged interest at minimum rate only (i.e. 5.5%) irrespective of their level of dependence on ST (SAO) refinance.

(iv) To enable to Cooperative Credit institutions to enhance their borrowing power for availing refinance support, NABARD provides long term loans to the State Governments for contributing to the share capital of their institutions.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) The existing refinance facilities extended by NABARD are considered to be adequate.

Use of Bio-Technology for Nutritious Food

903. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government plan to commercialise agriculture and to introduce the bio-technology to produce more wholesome and nutritious food; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SBPBK SATYANARAYANA RAO): (a) and (b) The Government aims at promoting sustainable and demand-driven growth of agriculture, based on efficient use of natural resources, to face the challenges arising from economic liberalization and globalization. Bio-technological interventions will play an important role in increasing crop yields as also quality of produce.